

Jennifer Bruha
ENGL 2210
MWF 11:00am, Mitrevski
Midterm Essay

2) Rousseau meets every criteria of a person living in the Romantic era. Just from the title of his work, "Confessions", a reader can deduce that this piece of literature is based on a main aspect of a Romantic's life - honesty. As an autobiography, Rousseau's "Confessions" focuses on him, and him alone, as an individual. Throughout the novel, Rousseau compares himself to the world around him and others in his life, a habit that each true Romantic forms during his or her life. From the very beginning, he stresses his individuality and uniqueness, saying, "I am unlike anyone I have ever met". The Romantic person intensely highlights how he or she is alone - no one can fully understand or communicate with them due to their unique being. Yet another aspect of Rousseau's life that is brought to attention in this work is that he "...felt before [he] thought", expressing how feelings and emotion always came before reason in his life. The Romantic persona also took great pleasure in being in a state of grief or longing, which Rousseau is in while he informs his readers of his love life, specifically with Mme. de Warrens. These characteristics - honesty, focus on his unique self, expression of emotion before use of reason, and being in the state of mind that longing for love is the strongest form of Romantic love - all strongly draw attention to the fact that Rousseau was indeed of the Romantic persona.